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NSC BRIEFING

9 December 1959

SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

- I. Moscow and Peiping's sharply divergent press and radio treatment of the President's trip reflects the frictions and policy differences that are presently straining relations between the two regimes.
 - A. Soviet comment is generally moderate and commendatory.
 1. Moscow giving President's activities very extensive and reasonably factual news coverage. No criticism of President and occasional praise for him as man of peace.
 - B. Peiping is taking an openly hostile attitude, bitterly attacking trip as effort to "sell false peace."
 1. Chinese charge "Eisenhower is merely using peace as a ruse in effort to gain time to expand own military strength in order to push aggression and war policy."
- II. Divergence on basic ideological and foreign policy issues reflects different interests and aims which flow, in turn, from difference in phase and pace of economic and social development in two countries.
 - A. Soviet leaders, with highly industrialized economy, can now afford luxury of easing internal pressures and can take more pragmatic approach to policy problems.
 - B. Chinese Communists, on other hand, with agrarian country with embryonic industry, rely heavily on doctrinal extremism and a tense internal atmosphere in their feverish drive for economic development and social transformation.

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C. While Khrushchev sees clear advantages in relaxation East-West tension, Chinese feel urgent need to maintain actively hostile attitude toward non-Communist world, US in particular.

1. Peiping favors more militant, revolutionary tactics for local Communists in underdeveloped areas. Chinese imply their own revolutionary experience is more relevant than Soviets' to such areas.

III. China's internal policies, particularly emphasis on communes, have created frictions between two regimes.

A. Moscow appears to have regarded communes as ill-conceived policy from start.

1. It was Chinese claim that commune represents shortcut to Communism and possible model for other Communist countries, which drew sharp rebuff from Soviets.

IV. Soviet leaders no longer concealing their displeasure and distrust of Chinese.

A. Khrushchev's last three major speeches contained clear evidence of his concern over Peiping's challenge to Soviet ideological primacy and hegemony in Communist world.

1. In speech to Hungarian Party Congress 1 December, he warned if leaders of any bloc country become "conceited," this "can only play into the hands of the enemy."

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2. Such thinly veiled public criticism of Chinese policies reflect his determination to restore bloc discipline and unity under Moscow's lead.
3. Most candid public Soviet criticism occurred in 2 December lecture at Moscow University in which speaker referred to difficulties in Sino-Soviet relations, specifically mentioning Chinese actions on Indian border and "cold and incorrect" reception given Khrushchev on visit to Peiping in early October.
- V. For their part, Chinese leaders probably equally annoyed with Khrushchev.
- A. They probably consider his failure back them in Indian border dispute as breach of "socialist unity."
- B. They probably would be happy to see him replaced but, recognizing solidity his position in Soviet party, do not feel secret approaches to other Soviet leaders would yield desired results.
- C. They will, however, probably continue press own position and attempt influence Soviet and Bloc leaders in direction favorable Chinese interests.

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2. Pending increase in international stature, Peiping prepared to make some temporary concession toward Soviet position.

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3. Peiping radio currently omitting references to force against Taiwan.

D. Another point of friction may be Peiping's presumed desire acquire nuclear weapons and missiles.

1. Soviets probably reluctant supply such weapons because would greatly enhance China's position and influence within Bloc; Soviets may also fear Chinese might court unnecessary risks in policy toward U.S.

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Mao

had raised issue with Khrushchev during latter's recent visit Peiping. Khrushchev said to have rejected Mao's request on ground negotiations in progress to ban nuclear weapons.

3. Suslov told visiting Austrian delegation last July China would have atomic bomb in 4 or 5 years but denied USSR would supply weapons. Said Soviets training Chinese in USSR how make own weapons.

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VI. Indication of strain in Soviet-Chinese relations does not mean rupture of alliance is in sight. Both parties have too much at stake permit that. Any Western attempts to exploit strains at this time would increase incentive of both parties to resolve differences.

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